

web site, or other appropriate means. The public shall be provided with an opportunity to comment at such meetings.

(6) Public meetings and workshops shall be held at such times and locations as to facilitate participation by the public.

(7) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on draft documents.

(c) *Outreach to socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and communities.* (1) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall develop and conduct public outreach activities to ensure that socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, including individuals with limited English proficiency, and communities are provided opportunities to review and comment during implementation of the Plan.

(2) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall monitor the effectiveness of outreach activities conducted to ensure that socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and communities, including individuals with limited English proficiency, are provided opportunities to review and comment during implementation of the Plan.

(3) Project Management Plans and Program Management Plans shall include information, concerning any outreach activities to be undertaken during the implementation of the project or activity, to socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and communities, including individuals of limited English proficiency.

(4) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall make project and program information available in languages other than English where a significant number of individuals in the area affected by the project or program activity are expected to have limited English proficiency.

(5) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall provide translators or similar services at public meetings where a significant number of participants are expected to have limited English proficiency.

§ 385.19 Environmental and economic equity.

(a) Project Management Plans and Program Management Plans shall include information concerning any environmental and economic equity activities to be undertaken during the implementation of the project or activity.

(b) As required by applicable laws and policies, the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall consider and evaluate environmental justice issues and concerns in the implementation of projects.

(c) During the implementation of the Plan, through appropriate means, consistent with section 601(k) of WRDA 2000 and other provisions of Federal law, the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall provide information to socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and communities, including individuals with limited English proficiency, about potential or anticipated contracting opportunities that are expected to result from implementation of the Plan.

(d) The District Engineer shall ensure that small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals are provided opportunities to participate under section 15(g) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(g)) throughout the implementation process. The District Engineer shall track the amount of contracts awarded to small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals in order to ensure that they are provided such opportunities.

§ 385.20 Restoration Coordination and Verification (RECOVER).

(a) RECOVER (Restoration Coordination and Verification) is an inter-agency and interdisciplinary scientific and technical team described in the "Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement," dated April 1, 1999. RECOVER was established by the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District to conduct assessment, evaluation, and planning and integration activities using the best available science that support implementation of the Plan with the

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overall goal of ensuring that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved. RECOVER has been organized into a Leadership Group that provides management and coordination for the activities of RECOVER and teams that accomplish activities such as: developing system-wide performance measures; developing and implementing the monitoring and assessment program; evaluating alternatives developed by Project Delivery Teams to achieve the goals and purposes of the Plan; conducting system-wide water quality analyses; developing, refining, and applying system-wide models and tools; and evaluating modifications to the Plan. RECOVER is not a policy making body, but has technical and scientific responsibilities that support implementation of the Plan.

(b) Documents or work products prepared or developed by RECOVER shall not be self-executing, but shall be provided as information for consideration by the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies. Technical information developed by RECOVER shall be available to the public.

(c) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall encourage the participation of other Federal, State, and local agencies and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida on RECOVER, to use their expertise, to ensure that information developed by RECOVER is shared at the earliest possible time with agencies, tribes, and the public, and to ensure that matters of concern are addressed as early as possible. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District recognize the special role of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the Department of Commerce, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Department of the Interior and the Florida Fish and Wildlife

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Conservation Commission as stewards of the natural system and for their technical and scientific activities in support of restoration. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District recognize the special role of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in water quality issues. Accordingly, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District have used and will continue to use the Department of the Interior, the Department of Commerce, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection as co-chairs along with the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District on the appropriate technical teams that have been established to date as part of RECOVER.

(1) In general, participation on RECOVER shall be the financial responsibility of the participating agency or tribe.

(2) Participation by an agency or tribe on RECOVER shall not be considered or construed to be a substitute for consultation, coordination, or other activities required by applicable law, policy, or regulation.

(d) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall:

(1) Assign program managers from the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District to be responsible for carrying out the activities of RECOVER; and

(2) Establish a RECOVER Leadership Group to assist the program managers in coordinating and managing the activities of RECOVER, including the establishment of sub-teams or other entities, and in reporting on the activities of RECOVER. In addition to the program managers, the RECOVER Leadership Group shall, consist of one member appointed by each of the following:

- (i) Environmental Protection Agency;
- (ii) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;
- (iii) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- (iv) U.S. Geological Survey;
- (v) National Park Service;

(vi) Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida;

(vii) Seminole Tribe of Florida;

(viii) Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services;

(ix) Florida Department of Environmental Protection; and

(x) Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

(3) As necessary to assist the program managers, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District may add additional members to the RECOVER Leadership Group.

(e) RECOVER shall perform assessment, evaluation, and planning and integration activities as described in this paragraph.

(1) *Assessment activities.* In accordance with §385.31, RECOVER shall conduct credible scientific assessments of hydrological, water quality, biological, ecological, water supply, and other responses to the Plan. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District will ensure that these assessments incorporate the best available science and that the results are provided for external peer review, as appropriate, and are made fully available for public review and comment. RECOVER shall conduct assessment activities, including, but not limited to:

(i) Developing proposed assessment performance measures for assessing progress towards the goals and purposes of the Plan;

(ii) Developing a proposed monitoring plan to support the adaptive management program;

(iii) Conducting monitoring and assessment activities as part of the adaptive management program to assess the actual performance of the Plan;

(iv) Developing recommendations for interim goals in accordance with §385.38;

(v) Assessing progress towards achieving the interim goals established pursuant to §385.38;

(vi) Developing recommendations for interim targets in accordance with §385.39;

(vii) Assessing progress towards achieving the interim targets established pursuant to §385.39; and

(viii) Cooperating with the independent scientific review panel and external peer review in accordance with §385.22.

(2) *Evaluation activities.* In accordance with §385.26(c) and §385.32, RECOVER shall assist Project Delivery Teams in ensuring that project design and performance is fully linked to the goals and purposes of the Plan and incorporating, as appropriate, information developed for Project Implementation Reports into the Plan. RECOVER shall conduct evaluation activities, including, but not limited to:

(i) Developing proposed evaluation performance measures for evaluating alternative plans developed for the Project Implementation Report;

(ii) Conducting evaluations of alternative plans developed for Project Implementation Reports and Comprehensive Plan Modification Reports; and

(iii) Supporting development and refinement of predictive models and tools used in the evaluation of alternate plans developed by the Project Delivery Teams.

(3) *Planning and integration activities.* RECOVER shall conduct planning and integration activities, in accordance with §385.31, in support of the adaptive management program as a basis for identifying opportunities for improving the performance of the Plan and other appropriate planning and integration activities associated with implementation of the Plan. RECOVER shall conduct planning and integration activities, including, but not limited to:

(i) Developing and refining conceptual and predictive models and tools in support of the integration of new science into the adaptive management program;

(ii) Reviewing and synthesizing new information and science that could have an effect on the Plan;

(iii) Developing proposed refinements and improvements in the design or operation of the Plan during all phases of implementation;

(iv) Preparing technical information to be used in the development of the periodic reports to Congress prepared pursuant to §385.40; and

(v) Analyzing proposed revisions to the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan.

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(f) In carrying out the functions described in this section, RECOVER shall consider the effects of activities and projects that are not part of the Plan, but which could affect the ability of the Plan to achieve its goals and purposes.

(g) As appropriate, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall seek external peer review of RECOVER activities in accordance with § 385.22(b).

§ 385.21 Quality control.

(a) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall prepare a quality control plan, in accordance with applicable Corps of Engineers regulations, for each product that will be produced by a Project Delivery Team. The quality control plan shall be included in the Project Management Plan and shall describe the procedures to be used to ensure compliance with technical and policy requirements during implementation.

(b) During development of the Project Management Plan for each project, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall establish a Technical Review Team to conduct reviews to ensure that products are consistent with established criteria, guidance, procedures, and policy. The members of the Technical Review Team shall be independent of the Project Delivery Team and the project being reviewed, and should be knowledgeable of design criteria established for the Plan.

(c) Technical review is intended to be a continuous process throughout project implementation. The Technical Review Team shall document its actions and recommendations and provide reports to the Project Delivery Team at designated points during the implementation process that shall be described in the quality control plan.

§ 385.22 Independent scientific review and external peer review.

(a) *The independent scientific review panel required by section 601(j).* (1) Section 601(j) of WRDA 2000 requires that the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor, in consultation with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, establish an independent sci-

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entific review panel, convened by a body, such as the National Academy of Sciences, to review the Plan's progress toward achieving the natural system restoration goals of the Plan. Section 601(j) also directs that this panel produce a biennial report to Congress, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor that includes an assessment of ecological indicators and other measures of progress in restoring the ecology of the natural system, based on the Plan.

(2) To carry out section 601(j), the Department of the Army, the Department of the Interior, and the State shall establish an independent scientific review panel to conduct on-going review of the progress achieved by the implementation of the Plan in achieving the restoration goals of the Plan and shall provide the panel with the resources and cooperation necessary to ensure that the panel is able to function effectively.

(3) Not later than June 14, 2004, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor, in consultation with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, shall enter into a five-year agreement, with options for extensions in five-year increments, with the National Academy of Sciences to convene this panel.

(4) The Department of the Army, the Department of the Interior, and the State expect that the National Academy of Sciences will use established practices for assuring the independence of members and that the review panel will include members reflecting a balance of the knowledge, training, and experience suitable to comprehensively review and assess progress towards achieving natural system restoration goals of the Plan.

(5) To ensure the independence of the section 601(j) panel, its sole mission shall be to review the Plan's progress toward achieving the natural system restoration goals of the Plan and to produce a biennial report to Congress, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor that includes an assessment of ecological indicators and other measures of progress in restoring the ecology of the natural system, based on the